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H. A. W. 3
The Day of Roads.

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D I S C O U R S E ,

DELIVERED ON THE

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The following discourse, hastily prepared, is yielded to the public, somewhat reluctantly, because of the difficulty some are likely to find, in detecting the religious character, generally required in a Sermon. Many, who have two distinct compartments in their souls, one for secular and the other for religious matters, will probably hand it over to the surveyors of highways, as belonging specially to them. They, on the other hand, who have learned to see religion interfused in all things, and, by a secret presence, in the whole history of man, preparing her great designs concerning him; will assuredly feel that the humble and earthly subject discussed conducts them to a lofty and sacred eminence, where thrilling prospects open to their view and God's best promises, about to be fulfilled, challenge their devout worship and Thanksgiving. These, possibly, will realize the truth that, for certain purposes, we get the best view of a field, when we look on it from afar.

H. B.

DISCOURSE, & c.

IN THE DAYS OF SHAMGAR THE SON OF ANATH, IN THE DAYS OF Jael,
THE HIGH WAYS WERE UNOCCUPIED AND THE TRAVELLERS WALKED
THROUGH BYE-WAYS.

JUDGES V. 6.

I HOPE it will not be deemed a conceit, if I occupy you, to-day, with a discourse on Roads. It certainly will not, if I am able to collect about the subject those illustrations, which are necessary to its social and religious import.

The Road is that physical sign, or symbol, by which you will best understand any age or people. If they have no roads, they are savages; for the Road is a creation of man and a type of civilized society. If law is weak and society insecure, you will see men perched in castles, on the top of inaccessible rocks, or gathered into walled cities, spending all their strength, not in opening Roads, but in fortifying themselves against the access of danger. The draw-bridge is up, the portcullis down, and sentinels are mounted on the ramparts, carefully studying every footman or horseman, that turns the corner of a wood, or gallops across the distant plain. Wheeled vehicles are seldom seen, and roads are rather obstructed than opened. Or if you inquire after commerce, look at the Roads; for

Roads are the ducts of trade. If you wish to know whether society is stagnant, learning scholastic, religion a dead formality, you may learn something by going into universities and libraries; something also by the work that is doing on cathedrals and churches, or in them; but quite as much by looking at the Roads. For if there is any motion in society, the Road, which is the symbol of motion, will indicate the fact. When there is activity, or enlargement, or a liberalizing spirit of any kind, then there is intercourse and travel, and these require Roads. So if there is any kind of advancement going on, if new ideas are abroad and new hopes rising, then you will see it by the roads that are building. Nothing makes an inroad, without making a Road. All-creative action, whether in government, industry, thought, or religion, creates Roads.

In the days of Shamgar and the Judges, there was no law or security. Every one did what was right in his own eyes, i. e. what was wrong in the eyes of every body else. Gangs of robbers and marauders prowled over the country, stripping every passenger, and rushing into the gate of every walled town, if they could find it open. This middle age, continuing for two hundred years, was also the dark age of Israel, and was to that nation what the dark ages, so called, have been to Christendom. As there was no security, there was of course, no commerce or trade. The highways therefore, were "unoccupied," i. e. unused; the public roads, such as they had, were blocked up and made impassable, and the bridges torn down, to prevent hostile incursions upon the towns. The travellers therefore, or more literally, the footers, for there was no travel, save on foot, walked through bye-

ways or crooked and obscure trails — picking out their way across mountain passes, through glens and over the fields. What a picture of society have we here — the whole book of Judges in a sentence.

So things continued till the reign of law began to be established under Samuel and David. This latter finally went so far as to open a commercial treaty with Hiram of Tyre; and as the object of the treaty was to procure timber for the temple, we see that a commercial road was opened leading down to Tyre. Another must have been constructed, leading off to Lebanon. When Solomon came to the throne, a new age was dawning. He was, moreover, a liberal and cultivated man himself, acquainted with all the foreign courts about him, and he went into relations of active intercourse with them. He opened a lively and lucrative commerce with the East, with Egypt and the Red Sea, and sent out his ships of commerce even to Spain. He had also, fourteen hundred chariots of war, which are also an indication that he had Roads leading in every direction. I do not say that this was an age of the highest civilization, or the greatest public happiness. Some mournful consequences were to be produced, by this very activity of intercourse and travel. Still it was the splendid age of Israel—the age of new hope, excitement, wealth and power. Therefore it was the age of Roads; and Roads were the type of the age; travel the spring of its activity. Now it was that philosophy and learning of every kind most flourished, now that architecture began to be cultivated, now that religion displayed the greatest zeal for expense, built its chief monument and enacted its most public and gorgeous solemnities.

Could we restore the lost history of Egypt, we should

find that the splendid age of that buried realm of splendor and power, the age of the pyramids, was an age of Roads. The hundred gates, too, of Thebes would be seen pouring out their vehicles of commerce and travel, and their chariots of war, rolling up the dust of the plain, till they are lost in the smoky horizon on every side. Now, Egypt is more like Israel in the days of Shamgar.

The splendid age of the Roman empire is known to have been an age of Roads. The Appian Way, leading off to Brundisium, on the south-eastern coast of the peninsula, about four hundred miles, paved with hexagonal blocks of stone laid in cement, was not the only one. This was built three hundred years before Christ. As the empire grew in power and splendor, Roads multiplied; till, in the age of the Antonines, one might stand in the forum between highways coming in from the north and the south, the east and the west, and see travel pouring in from Scotland on one side, and Antioch on the other. Mountains were perforated, rivers bridged, mile-stones set up, and the roads themselves were hardened to a floor, macadamized before the time of McAdam, by sand, gravel and cement. All the distant provinces and cities were united, in this manner, and regular posts established. Beginning at Scotland, the Roman could travel on by post to Antioch, a distance of nearly four thousand miles, interrupted only by the passage of the English Channel and the Hellespont. And it is actually related, as one of the memorabilia of the age, that one Cæsius went post from Antioch to Constantinople, six hundred and sixty-five miles, in less than six days. But the power of Rome was in its arms, and these Roads were built rather as the bonds of conquest

and means of military subjection, than for the benefit of industry or the social advancement of the empire. Still they represent activity. When these Roads are building, something is going on—it is no stagnant age. It is also to be remarked, that while the Roads consolidated the empire, they also assisted the civilization and conversion of the nations through which they passed. Christianity went forth on the Roads, as a traveller and a soldier, to consolidate her empire.

Again, it is known that the crusades gave birth to modern commerce, and that commerce gave that spring to wealth and refinement, which erected the cathedrals of Flanders, Germany, France and England. The cathedral age was an age of Roads and of travel. And it would be well, if those who boast the glory and religious grandeur of this wonderful age, contrasting it with our shallow age of speed and trade and travel, would remember that Roads built the cathedrals. Possibly we may have something to build, quite as admirable as these, though something certainly a little different from these.

For, now, it is clear enough that a new age of Roads has come, and the world is waking up to do something. The days of Shamgar the son of Anath are ended, and the people of the walled towns and castles are coming out to build Roads. They build not merely Roads of earth and stone, as of old, but they build iron Roads. And not content with horses of flesh, they are building horses also of iron, such as never faint or lose their breath, and go, withal, somewhat faster even than the Roman post—not to speak of the immense loads they whirl over mountains and through them, from mart to mart and from one shore

to another. We have invented, too, another kind of sail, which runs against the wind or away from it, stemming tides and climbing currents, making Roads through oceans, and changing the great inland sluices of the world into paths of commerce and travel. And where we cannot go bodily to speak ourselves, we send out newspapers as the posts of thought, setting every man to talking with every other, so that all which the great good men are doing and planning is known to every body, and all that oppressors and knaves do, or would do, is exposed, execrated, and if any shame is left, shamed out of the world. Nor is this all, we have produced still another new kind of Road, which outstrips all the horses, whether of flesh or of iron, a Road for Thought; which when we get complete, the world will become a vast sensorium, spinning out its nerves of cognition and feeling, and keeping the whole body apprized, in every limb and member, of what the electric organ meditates. Whatever else we may think, or hope, or fear, it is quite certain that this is an age of Roads. If the Shamgars of conservatism, looking out of the loop-holes of their walled towns and seeing so many people out whirling through the air, are frightened by the sight, fearing lest all the walls of stability and defence are going to break way, still, the Roads will be built and the motion will go on. Wise or unwise, the world has taken it into its head to have Roads and there is a destiny in it, against which remonstrance is unavailable. Indeed, they need not go to their battlements or loop-holes to see it; for this destiny, good or bad, has already broken through their walls. Many a time, within the last year, have I seen the Rail Road forcing the parapets and buttresses of walled cities and

sending in the iron horse of travel, in thunder and smoke, to its very centre. I never knew so well before, what that word *destiny* means; for here I have seen the new age breaking through the old; power reversing all its intents; and human society, by some fiat of God, compelled to unwrap the coil of its jealousies and fears, to seek, as a good, what it repelled as an evil; and the children moved to cast away, for their life's sake, what their fathers erected to save their bodies.

Acknowledging, then, that there is some destiny at work in this matter of Roads and of travel, let us study into it, a little, and see if we can gather what it means. It is not, as all history informs us, a social accident, a something existing by itself. It has its causes and will have its consequences. It is the indication of something existing, and of something to come. Some will say that it indicates a mechanical age; an age of utility, destitute of great sentiments, without genius, or faith, or reverence to the past, hurrying on to a sordid, meagre end, in moral and political anarchy, and atheistic barbarism. Doubtless we are making abundance of cheap cotton cloth and democracy, they will say, but where is that sense of authority and fine courtesy, which prevailed in the days of chivalry; where, above all, that sublime reverence for religion, that genius consecrated to religion, which casts its shadow on our degenerate heads, in the noble structures of the middle age? Now the truth is that these worshippers of authority, these gothic-mad moderns, who see nothing preparing, in our times, but money and democracy, would themselves have resisted all which gave birth to the very monuments they worship; for, as I have already intimated, it was

a Road making age, that built them—an age of revived activity and commerce. And the very struggle of that day was to get the Roads; for it was the want of Roads, that constituted the chief obstacle to commerce and delayed, so long, its appearance among the European nations. They knew no other state than a state of seclusion. Commerce was even a thing not yet conceived. Even the kings of England had their garments made by women on their farms. And when a certain ambassador, at the court of Otho, boasted that the Lombard people had as fine clothes as the Greeks, and it was ascertained that the Lombards actually got them from their markets, through Venice and Amalfi, they were greatly exasperated that foreigners should presume to buy their clothes! So little conception had they of trade, that purchase was an affront and sale a treason. At length, the nations began to taste the benefits to be gained by commerce. But it was, at first, a stolen taste, and was gotten only by extreme hazard. In England and Germany, for example, the nobles sallied out of their castles to rob every traveller and merchant who would cross their domain. These seats of chivalry were maintained by robbery, and it was impossible to transport merchandize, even for short distances, in safety. The Hanseatic League, comprising the four commercial cities of Germany, was organized for the very purpose of securing the merchants against these land pirates and putting an end to the days of Shamgar. Although trade began to get a footing in England, and this kind of robbery ceased, still every noble barbarian who had a castle, being the owner of the Road on his domain, carried on a robbery in the shape of tolls, at his borders, his bridges and his market, which was nearly as bad

as the more violent method. To secure an open Road therefore, was still the problem of the age, and one of the first laws passed by the parliament was a law to excuse the merchant from going out of his way to pay toll, when he could cross, at a ford, or in some nearer way, to better advantage. At length, the Roads were opened, trade flowed in, wealth increased, the public mind was liberalized and a spirit of taste and refinement grew up. And then, at last, the great cathedrals began to lift their turrets unto the sky. Meantime how many of the fine conservatives of that age, do you suppose, were lamenting over it as a degenerate, mercenary age, an age of merchandize and money, raising up a class of upstarts to rival the fine old nobility and destroy ancient precedence. Besides it was setting a strong current toward democracy, which was even worse. For, not only was Venice, at length, forbidden by the Holy See to kidnap christian people and sell them as slaves to the Saracens, in which her trade begun; not only did the Irish council determine to import no more English children, as slaves, which had been a regular trade before, but the serf on every estate began to be looked upon as a man, labor rose to higher price than it commands even now, and sentiments began to work in the heart of the English nation, which did not stay their action, till every trace of serfdom was done away. Now in this former age of Roads, (for I know not how to describe it by any better epithet,) there is some looking towards utility certainly, and also toward democracy; and yet even a better result than the cathedrals grew out of it, viz. an elevation of character and virtue—a religious elevation. There was more manhood, as there was more humanity; more piety as there was less robbery;

barbarism drew back, as comfort, wealth and virtue multiplied; genius came forth to make a thank offering for its freedom, shot up its holy gratitude into vaulted aisles and sky piercing pinnacles, and left the cathedrals standing as so many monuments of thanksgiving for Roads!

An age of Roads, then, is not, of course, an age of moral decay and dissipation, even though it has some looking towards utility and equality. Possibly it may not always end in gothic architecture, possibly there may be other kinds of good, in the universe, beside gothic architecture. Pardon me, if I suggest the possibility, that God may have something better and nobler than this in store for the coming ages; for though some persons, gifted with a dull imagination, are ever assuming that facts are the measure of God's possibilities, and that no good is to be hoped for save the good that has been, it is yet remarkable that new kinds of good do appear in human history, and there may be some yet to appear, which have not been.

I think, too, that we can detect several new elements at work, in our age of Roads, which are not altogether evil, or destitute of promise. Travel and motion of every kind are signs of life, and life implies the quickening presence of new ideas; for a dead body can as easily support a motion, as a dead idea. I shall be able too, I think, to shew you, in a brief review, that, with all other kinds of travel in this age, new ideas are coming into action and travelling also. Physical improvement associates moral and moral stimulates physical. There is a reciprocal action between commerce and thought, thought and society, society and religion. Improved Roads connect beneficent inroads, and the subjugation of matter associates the

subjugation of social and political evil. Accordingly, new ideas, such as these which follow, are waking into life and pressing their way into the heart of the world—peace between nations and a reciprocal interest; religious and civil liberty; man as man, to be protected, educated, elevated by equal laws; Christian light, unity, and beneficence.

An American sets off to travel, a few months, in Europe, and see what can be seen with his eyes. His impressions will of course be superficial and, in many respects, erroneous. He lands, we will suppose, in England. The first thing he discovers is that England is a land of Roads, new Roads, and that every body there, as here, is in motion. The whole map of the island is covered with a fine net work of rails and macadamized Roads, and yet Road-making is but just begun. And, among all the English whirling over these Roads, he meets, every few hours, one of his own countrymen, till he begins to think that his countrymen are waging a crusade of travel. In the mail coaches, he travels ten or eleven miles an hour and upon the Railroad from thirty to sixty. He goes into Scotland, he pierces the highlands; and here he hears the rolling of the engine; sweeps through the lakes in steamboats; skirts along their shores, round the peaks and crags and across the glens, where Rob Roy and the Campbells whistled their clansmen, on a broad, smooth, macadamized Road. He remembers that he is in the old world and he looks about for something old. Occasionally he sees a ruined abbey, or castle, or enters some ancient cathedral. But he is surprised to find so general an aspect of newness, in the objects he sees. Even old Chester, sufficiently marked by its antique air, is most irreverently disturbed by two or

three Railroads digging into the walls and through the town. London shows, indeed, a little patch or two of the old city wall, as a curiosity, but, on the whole, it has the air of a fresh modern city. An immense work of creation is going on every where, and a young England is rising out of the old, full of power and visibly stimulated by new thoughts. In the diplomatic quarrel that is going on with his country, about Oregon, he is compelled to observe the dignified and healthful desire of peace that sways the mind of the British people. England is doubtless under bonds, in her debt and the immense wealth at stake in her commerce, to keep the peace. But a very strong Christian feeling against war, is also gaining strength every year. That insolent prejudice against other nations, which is the disagreeable distinction of Englishmen, and rises, in part, from their insular state, is yielding, at length, to the possibility that there may be something right and respectable, out of England. The common people are moving; some of them have been as far as to London, and many others have been out of the town in which they were born, and returned with enlarged ideas. And the fact that so many Roads are prepared for their accommodation suggests, to many, that they are worth being accommodated. In the corn-law struggle, the landed aristocracy, it is well understood, lost the last hope of supremacy and suffered a conclusive defeat. It is well understood also, that an abatement of the laws of primogeniture and entail must ultimately follow, and then, as a consequence, a new distribution of property, which is the greatest social want of the English nation. Meantime the same spirit of humanity, which overthrew slavery, is searching after some plan of common education for the

people. The barbarous rigors of penal law are disappearing. Commissioners are raised, every year, to inquire into the miseries of the laboring classes and laws are passed to improve their comfort. The mountain loads of scorn and oppression, which have so long lain upon them, are beginning to heave. A more enlarged, indeed, I may say, a truly enlarged humanity and fellow feeling actuates public men, in the high offices of state. In the great debate on the corn-law question, it was a kind of triumph, to an American, to observe that every speaker felt it necessary to be on the popular side, and that every thing was made, by the opposing parties, to hang on showing what was the interest of the people, the laboring people. Religion is a greater subject and closer to the English mind than it has been for centuries. Old ideas are returning as new, and new ideas are starting into life to assault and strangle the old. On one side, the establishment is yielding to apostacy. On the other, its existence, as an establishment, is assaulted by a force, which is daily gathering vigor and assuming a more condensed form of action. The clergy perceive that a change must sooner or later come. The government is inquiring, meantime, whether it may not possibly strengthen the establishment, by establishing also the Catholic Church of Ireland? but fears to offend the known bigotry of its two established religions, by the equal recognition of a third. Some of the more judicious and pure minded, in the Anglican establishment, are beginning to question whether its spiritual good would not be promoted, if it were separated from the state and from all connection with state patronage. Others are the more exasperated, the more they see of danger, and spare no act of insult or oppression against

the dissenters, that will sufficiently vent the disturbance they feel. Every month repeats some instance of the kind and that adds fuel to the fire already kindled. The English mind moves slowly, but the issue, though distant, is not doubtful. The new age must come. The law of truth, of equal right, and, above all, of Christian purity must prevail. Or, if it be a question, as some will say, between Roads and Cathedrals, which, in one sense, it certainly is, what chance have the dead against the living?

Arming himself now, with road-books, a convenience unknown to Herodotus in his Egyptian travels, and another evidence or indication of our Road-making habit—providing himself with these, which facilitate all the purposes of travel, as much as the Roads do travel itself; conducting him to comfort, and opening all the gates of knowledge before him, so that he may pass directly to that, which, coming as a stranger, it would take weeks or years to discover—the traveller sets off for the continent. He lands, we will say, in Belgium—at the terminus of a Railroad, of course. He sees on the engine, quite likely, a name which indicates American manufacture, and, in company with this and other Americans, for they are every where, he commences his journey towards the Rhine. Belgium is the ancient Flanders, the mother of English manufactures and commerce and the cock pit, in all ages, of the European armies. The old towns throw up their cathedrals, at short distances, studding the sky, monuments all of ancient commerce; a commerce which the Roads, sweeping by, have come, if possible, to resuscitate—not without some slight signs of effect. These Roads too plough their way across the old battle grounds, memorable in history—peace rushing over

the fields of war, with a glory as much brighter as her victories are nobler. One monument towers above the plain where Napoleon bowed, at last, to the fortune of arms; a mound of earth two hundred feet or more in height, surmounted not by the British but the Belgic lion, boasting no victory, but standing to commemorate, in silence, the birth time of peace. New ideas are at work in Belgium. The priests are jealous of commerce and commerce growls at the priests. The king, I believe, does what he can for his people, and the Roads do more. Free sentiments are springing up and signs of quickening are visible, though the country is over populated and the masses are greatly depressed by superstition. When the traveller enters the great cathedral, at Ghent, and looks upon the elegant carved group which supports the pulpit—Truth holding her open volume to the dazzled eyes of Time, inscribed —“Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light”—he thinks of the present degenerate Belgic race, before whom truth has shut her volume and the light of Christ is hid, not without hope that they will sometime find a prophecy, in what their fathers left them. At all events, the Roads are coming, and, without doubt, are bringing something of consequence with them—what that something may be, time will show.

We come upon the Rhine at Cologne, which is the Rome of the North. This old city, which thirty years ago, was crumbling under a doom of decay, is now reviving, as are most of the old cities of Germany, and showing signs of creative action. The mind of Germany, so long active within itself and in the universities, has caught the spirit of the age and is turning to relieve itself in works of physical improve-

ment,—building Roads of course—sixty thousand men at work building Roads—from Cologne in the west, to Berlin in the east; from Hamburg and Bremen in the north, to Vienna in the south; also to Frankfort, Dresden, Munich and I know not where beside. In a few years, probably less than five, the steam car will rush from the English Channel, through Austria, to Trieste; and, in less than fifty, to St. Petersburg and thence onward, through Tartary, to China and the Eastern Ocean; by which time, another will have crossed the Rocky Mountains to Oregon, opening a line of travel, by which the complete circuit of the globe may be made, in less than two months. The Black Sea will soon be connected with the Baltic, through Moscow and St. Petersburg; and the work that is begun will not stop till the vast plains of Russia are spanned throughout with rails of iron and the whole empire rings under the rushing wheels of travel—rings, of course, with new ideas equally stirring and powerful. But we return to Germany. The spirit of thought and inquiry, which pervades the Protestant half of Prussia, is already breaking into the cities and universities of the Catholic portion, and thousands released from the superstitions of Rome, are withdrawing also from their allegiance. A still more rapid intercourse, produced by new facilities of travel, such as will bring all parts of the kingdom into sensible contact with each other, will either require a thorough reformation of the German Catholic church, or determine its extinction. Meantime the government, as honest and well meaning probably as any in the world, though unaccustomed to the modern popular ideas of liberty, is proving its beneficence by a bold attempt to educate the people. Power is thus accumulating in

them, and, as intelligence increases, so also does the free spirit. A constitutional form of government must follow, in which the popular will shall, in some way, limit the throne. Engaged in political struggles and duties on one side, and in physical improvement on the other, the German mind will cease, at length, to ferment in theories and become practical. Having emptied all the stores of learning, and tried all forms of thought, and uttered all the dreams and visions of which souls are capable; in a word, having opened Roads into every corner of the kingdoms, both of truth and of error, it will begin to settle on some practical results, worthy of the magnificent preparations it has made. German theology is a great terror to many, and it has certainly made strange havoc with the scriptures and with all received opinions. But I think I detect a law in its eccentricities, by which it is seen, in them all, to be moving towards a certain final result—a result in which Christ and the Christian Church have an interest as much greater than they had in the cathedrals of the former age, as truth is more divine than stone, and her temple more magnificent than any that is made with hands. Certain it is, that, if any thing can provide a menstruum which is able to dissolve the about equal bigotry of Protestantism and Romanism and bring them out into the open field of truth, to search after truth in its own evidence, and flow together, at last, into the unity of the truth, it is this German activity. Having done this, and nothing more, it will have accomplished a good sufficiently magnificent to compensate for all its aberrations; for, without this, somehow accomplished, it is manifest that the Christian Church can never make the attainment, or achieve the destiny for which she hopes.

Returning from this wide excursion, our traveller ascends the Rhine—by steam of course; for the Steamboats are plying on this rapid stream, almost as industriously as on the Hudson. Every bend of the river opens a vista of deserted and ruined castles, crowning the summits of the mountains and the isolated peaks that overhang the river. The poetaster sighs over the decay of so much chivalry and grandeur, but the man of sense, knowing that these were all so many abodes of land pirates and toll-gatherers, who subsisted on the prey of commerce, thanks God that finally a Road is opened for honest men to pass and do the honest business of their life. The grey old castles, crumbling under a curse have a harmless, stupid look, over which Time grins in mockery—he laughs himself at the sorry figure they make. Or, if some of them were built for purposes of personal security, in a lawless and violent age, regarding them only with reverential pity, as monuments of the days of Shamgar, he glories not in them, but in the new age of law which has at length descended on the world; knowing that law is now the grand castle of man, a castle as much more magnificent, as it is more comprehensive; as much firmer and nobler, as justice and truth are more unassailable and of a nature more august, than walls of stone.

Our traveller breaks into Switzerland through the city wall of Basle, under the smoke of a locomotive; for what else can open a path through the walls of fortified cities? Here in Switzerland he finds also new Roads, the best that can be made, but leaves Railroads, for the present, behind him. All the world are travelling in Switzerland, except the Swiss, and they are beginning to climb over the Alps after loads of

American cotton, which they manufacture and carry back to the transalpine markets. The Swiss are a fine people ; honest, simple-minded republicans — only they do not understand what liberty is. They think it is liberty in the canton Vaud, to compel Christian ministers to read their state proclamations against themselves, and do the bidding of the state in all respects. But the ministers think otherwise, and having taken their stand with the noble Vinet at their head, incurring silence, suspension, want and even the fear of death, they are some of them learning in their trials, what spiritual religion is — which they did not know before. Their persecutors, too, who are strangely enough called the radical party, are now rioting against the Jesuits and for their expulsion, which is just as bad in principle. But religion is reviving ; the Swiss mind is at work ; true liberty is feeling out its way. For long ages, this little nation of republicans, lay locked within their mountain fastnesses, shut away from the living world ; but now, the gates are open ; the living world has come, and they feel its quickening power. The valleys are threaded with fine, broad Roads ; the lakes fronted by palaces, built for hotels — the only palaces known to the Swiss ; Railroads are projected ; and some even think it possible that a steam car may sometime be heard thundering through the Alps, and making its appearance in Italy, on the other side.

But, for the present, we must go over, and not through them. Here, again, we find four stupendous Roads, all virtually new, climbing over these everlasting hills ; spanning chasms, plunging through promontories of rock, skirting gulfs, shedded with stone arches, here and there, for the avalanches to slide over ; pass-

ing, at the summit, between peaks of eternal ice; smooth, wide, easy of ascent and descent; northern Europe pouring over into southern, Protestantism into Popery, and Popery back into Protestantism; new ideas and old travelling back and forth, and passing on their way; and commerce, with its heavy loaded teams, rolling securely over these icy ramparts, in attempting which, a Hannibal lost three-fourths of his army. Climbing over one of these passes, that we will say of the Simplon, the traveller is made to feel, possibly for the first time in his life, what is in a Road; how much it means, what victories it signifies; what myrmidons of thought, more powerful than armies, are pouring over it, daily and nightly, from nation to nation. Meditating thus, a strange power rushes upon him, as if he had somehow fallen, for once, into the high-road of destiny itself. Is it that Napoleon, whom some have called the man of destiny, is represented in this work? Is it, that a force is every where displayed, which mocks the sternest frowns of nature, and tramps across her wildest gulfs of terror? Or, is it, rather, that he pictures the fierce soldier, storming these icy solitudes, not, as he thought, to open a way for his armies, but a way, rather, wherein the new future of Italy shall descend upon her? Here it is, if never before, that he conceives the moral import of a Road.

He reaches Milan, and first of all, he notices, with a smile, that they are here also visibly thinking of motion, having torn up the rough, old pavement of their streets, to lay down smooth lines of floor, in the tracks of the wheels, for easing and expediting their motion. Noting this, as a symptom, he is not surprised to see that this ancient, and many times ruined

city, is reviving once more. He pursues his way towards Venice, passing the once splendid cities of Bergamo, Brescia, Verona, Vincenza, Padua, on a fine, broad, macadamized Road constructed by the Austrian viceroy. The signs of improvement are few and sometimes display the marks of a people only half awake. On this magnificent Road, for example, the diligence will have, for its outfit, a conductor and two postilions, one for each span of horses. But the postilions cannot agree, whether to ride fast or slow, they stop every mile or two, the hindmost disconnects the horses of the foremost, and he, in turn, wheels into the path, that the other may not proceed without him; they threaten and storm at each other, and the conductor swears at both, and thus the magnificent Road comes, at last, in the practical result, to a very sorry figure, not at all relieved by the liveries, which connect the official dignity of the government with such an exhibition of mock enterprize. Such, now, is the beginning of life in Austria. When Austria is covered with Railroads, and quickened throughout by commerce, when private enterprize has come into powerful action, then will a single man do the work of these three; and doing it for himself, it will be well done, done with so much of character, that, without either jackboots or feathers, or the official horn hung under his shoulder, the deficient livery will not be missed.

At Peschiera, a famous military pass, where the Mincio issues from the Lago di Garda, the road passes through an enormous fortification, whose cannon bristle in the face of the traveller, as he crosses the moats and winds round the buttresses. Towards this fort cannon are trailing and troops marching; for the Aus-

trian government has just heard that there is another outbreak in the Roman States, and knows not what will come of it—a sign which has much meaning in it. At old Padua, he finds a Railroad leading down to the coast, off Venice. And here, the Venetians are just finishing a viaduct, on high stone arches, through the sea, six miles in length, over which the locomotive is to be rolled directly into old Venice—that same Venice which was thrown, like a stranded vessel, on a mud shoal, out at sea, to escape the robbers from the land, and obtain a safe mart for merchandise. Every year it was married, in a public pomp, to the sea; now it is married, in bands of iron, to the land. When too, this Road is extended to Milan, as it soon will be, commanding all the commerce of Lombardy and Switzerland, Venice will revive again, and will probably become more prosperous even, than when it was called Queen of the Sea, and had the commerce of the world. Already it begins to show a new air of life, and, what is truly characteristic of the age, it is building Roads within itself, or, what is the same, spanning with bridges, here and there, its numerous water alleys, to facilitate communication. And so, old Venice, having the “Bridge of Sighs” walled up, lighted with gas, made a free port of entry, and married to the land, looks up, as a bride again, and smiles. That new ideas are also in Venice, which promise more than all mere physical benefits, it is hardly necessary to affirm.

The traveller now crosses the Appenines, we will suppose, to Florence—much of the way on a new and excellent Road. He passes Bologna, a city of the Roman states, on his way. Here many signs of fresh creation are visible, and, as every body knows and might know before hand, there is something of unea-

siness, in this creative spirit. The Bolognese have wants, and, sometime or other, will have liberty to speak of their wants. Florence is a neat, vigorous looking city; and Tuscany, generally, wears a look of comfort. Here are law and justice, and the old spirit of liberty is still visible, in the character of the people. Nowhere, beyond the Alps, is the Roman government, or that of the Pope, so thoroughly despised. Florence, the old enemy, the deadly rival and scourge of Pisa, is now just about to be married to Pisa, by a Railroad; it being now discovered that both cities can exist together, and will, in fact, only assist the prosperity one of the other. Alas, that so much blood, and fire, and wrath should have been expended on a mistake, so easily seen in this age of commerce and Roads.

We pass on to the States of the Church. And here the people are growling, with a half stifled voice, for something which they cannot get. Why this ill nature? What is it they want? Why, they want Roads, and the Holy Father will not consent. And why do they want Roads? have they not all the Roads they ever had, and these in good order, some of them newly paved, for many miles, and almost as nicely as the Appian Way itself? Have they not a good new Road to Naples also? Assuredly something new, some dim hope of something better has got into the heads of the people, which mars their content. At length, the Holy Father dies and immediately a soft smile relaxes their faces. Regarding him, as the very representative of God, their mourning over Him takes on yet an involuntary smile;—because now they will have Roads! But Roads were not all they wanted, it was only safer to speak of Roads; they had some want of law, personal safety, freer marts of trade, tribunals clear of

bribery. Well, the new Pope enters on his office, and he says, yes, let there be Roads, Railroads, one to Civita Vecchia, one to Ancona on the other shore, one to Florence in the north, one to meet the Naples Road in the south. He will endeavor, also, to do something for education, he will secularize the tribunals of law, and the bureaus of state, and take off the enormous duties, which had thrown all commerce into the hands of smugglers. He may not be able to do all this; for it is already clear that the priests are against him and they are Legion, both in name and nature. But the Roads will be built, the robbers will lose their occupation, trade will spring up, the English travellers, who have created, at length, these new wants in the people; will pour in more copiously than ever, bringing new ideas still, and the very locomotives, rushing into the eternal city, and rolling their smoke over St. Peter's, will come as new ideas and types of modern power. No man could well understand the age of Shamgar, without a visit to the Roman states. It is soon to be over. The dark middle age of the Judges is coming to an end. Now, most assuredly, comes light, education, justice, and with all these, liberty, religious and civil liberty.

We return to France, where our excursion closes. France, as you well know, is also building Roads. She had fine Roads, many of them, paved with squared stone before; these were not enough to satisfy her commercial and manufacturing activity; for France, if I do not mistake, is improving more rapidly than any country in Europe. The great estates of the nobles and the abbeys were broken up, in the violence of the Revolution and under the reign of Napoleon, so that now the landed property of France is well distributed,

compared with almost any country in Europe. Hope dawns on labor, and industry opens a new era in physical advancement. Already a Railroad penetrates the old city of Nismes, so mournfully distinguished in the history of the Huguenots. Another will shortly connect Marseilles with Avignon, and the walls of the old inquisition, where the noble Rienzi perished a martyr to liberty, will shake at the sound of the engine and the coming of a renovated age. So there are Railroads spinning out of Paris, in every direction, and enough are already projected to cross nearly every department of the nation. France also desires peace ; for she well knows the import of war, and though she glories in Napoleon, she does not care to risk all her commerce and her growing prosperity, for the chance of seeing another. Meantime she talks, in her parliament, of a more equal and complete christian liberty. And, what is better still, many hearts are beginning to yearn, in all parts of the nation, for some better light, some more spiritual religion, such as meets the wants of their being. Old superstitions are breaking down ; atheism already old is shaking with decrepitude. Philosophers talk of religion, with such kind of wisdom as they can ; hamlets, and villages, here and there, turn upon their priests as impostors, and many signs of a great religious renovation appear. Sufficient proof have we here, that our age of utility, and of Roads, is not, of course, losing the sense of religion and not likely to end, in the meagre way, which many predict.

Most of the facts included in this brief sketch or review, it is well understood, were known to you before. But it has not been my object to instruct you in regard to facts, so much as to hold them before you,

in their moral connexions, as symbols of the age and of what God is working, in the age. In proposing a discourse on Roads, I did it in the hope that I should thus be able to give you a more distinct apprehension, than in any other way, of your age and its characteristics—its relation to past ages, its future prospects, and the methods by which it is reaching after results of use, of common beneficence and common humanity. In no other way can you understand so well what is going on in the world, and what is preparing, and what kind of ideas are at work, whether new or old, malignant or hopeful, as simply to note that this is a Road building age. The dark age built castles, on the inaccessible peaks of mountains, to get away from enemies, we build cottages, on public Roads, which we like to have as perfect as possible, to facilitate access and motion. The Egyptians built pyramids over the dead, we build Roads to give life and swiftness to the living. The Chinese erect a wall to shut themselves in; we open Roads and ports and span the ocean itself with floating bridges, that we may go every where and behold the coming of all people.

And what is specially remarkable, this Road building movement is the first example, in the history of mankind, where all the great nations of the world have moved together, and been actuated by a common aim. One has given itself to commerce, another to arms and conquest, another to art, another to the sea, another to agriculture. Now, all are for commerce, interchange, travel and motion together. And, what is yet more sublime and hopeful, they all are feeling the pressure of the same great moral ideas, peace, liberty, education, religious light, and unity. The desire of physical improvement holds a natural

and philosophic connection with all these great ideas, moral and religious. In our physical improvements, we seek ends of beneficence, such as the ease and cheapness of production, the convenience of a market, the facility of intercourse between the masses of society, and thus we pass over to think of intellectual and moral results, peace, knowledge, liberty, holy virtue, heavenly unity — our ideal of BENEFICENCE, allows no limitation ; it associates every thing good, by virtue of its own goodness ; and accordingly, it will be found, much as we hear of the sordid spirit of this age of utility, that the very thought which moves us, in our universal Road building, is one that cannot be satisfied, till every thing included in beneficence, as an ideal, is fulfilled.

WHAT IS TO COME? That is a question opening visions of future good, which, though we cannot prophecy, we cannot but indulge.

Undoubtedly a new era of wealth is at hand. Commerce never has failed to bring wealth to any nation, and it can enrich all as easily as one. Nay, one, the more easily, that it is permitted to enrich all. It follows, of necessity, that the population of the world will be vastly increased.

Wars, it will also be seen, cannot, if they occur, be as long as they have been heretofore. Where it is possible to transport an army, with all its supplies and munitions, a thousand miles in three days, pouring one nation into the bosom of another, almost at will, it is evident that wars must come to their issue, in the fall of one party or the other, in a very short time. This will create an indisposition in the nations to engage in war. The conviction, too, that nations have a natural

interest in each other and are not natural enemies, as was once the current maxim of the world ; the advantages also of commerce and the noble triumphs of peace, will all conspire to create a common opinion, at length, against war. The absurdity of war, too, will have been abundantly shown and its disagreement with the great principles of Christianity. The appeal to arms therefore, as a means of redress for injuries, will be classed with the old method of trial by combat, and will disappear, we may hope, in the same manner. Prophecy will thus fulfil her holy vision — the nations will learn war no more.

Another promise will follow in the train ; for as many run to and fro, knowledge will be increased. I am fully sensible, as you know, to the dangers which beset an age of travel and motion. Every good brings its dangers with it. And did we not see a desire of universal education every where attending and keeping company with the extension of facilities for travel, we might well fear, lest so much of running to and fro, will end in a general destruction of all sober habits ; producing, at last, a state of society, which is made up only of surfaces, emptied of every solid principle. But the schools, we observe, are spreading, as the Roads are extending ; and the hope of attaining to a better social state is in fact the common stimulus of both. The governments of Christendom, are every where consenting to the fact, that they exist for the good of all who live under them. And this thought, shaping their policy, gives them an interest in the masses under them, makes them protectors of industry, and prepares them to assist and encourage industry, by favoring such a distribution of property, as will best effect an object so worthy. Having it for their prob-

lem to make every man as valuable as possible, to himself and to his country, and becoming more and more inspired, as we may hope, by an aim so lofty, every means will be used to diffuse education, to fortify morals, and favor the holy power of religion. This being done, there is no longer any danger from travel. On the contrary, the masses of society, will by this means, be set forward continually in character and intelligence. As they run, knowledge will be increased. The roads will themselves be schools; for here they will see the great world moving and feel themselves to be a part of it. Their narrow, local prejudices will be worn off, their superstitions will be forgotten. Every people will begin to understand and appreciate every other, and a common light will be kindled in all bosoms.

The effects which are to result, in matters of religion, from the universal interchange of travel, in our age of Roads, are a subject of yet graver import. Man lives for religion. Human society exists for religion. And it is remarkable how all the great movements of society for the last fifty years, the wars, diplomacies, and even the public wrongs of the world, have tended, universally and even visibly, to favor the extension of Christian truth, and invigorate the efforts of Christian love. Observing a fact so palpable in all the external doings of the nations, who can withhold a suspicion that a correspondent aim penetrates the internal work of society, and, of course, that our age of Roads has some holy purpose of God fulfilling, in its social revolutions, which connects with the coming reign of Christ on earth?

Manifestly freedom of thought and opinion is soon to be universal, and this will throw all truth upon the decision of evidence. Then, force being no longer em-

ployed to constrain men's opinions, the false antagonism of fear and passion will no longer disturb the balance of the christian mind as now, and truth will rule by her own right in her own field. Opinions, being determined only by argument and evidence, will naturally approximate. The christian mind, liberalized by intercourse, will suffer a more enlarged charity, and the charity of forbearance will be followed by the charity of love. The boundaries of nations, spanned by bands of iron, crossed and re-crossed, many times a day, as freely as the birds of the air fly over them and as swiftly, will cease at length to be felt. The Roads of intercourse will create vital bonds of unity between nations, and a common circulation, like that of the ducts of the body, will make the members one, as by a common life.

Meantime, there is an assimilating power in intercourse, which cannot be over estimated. So great is this power, that every new Road of travel, which expedites intercourse between the older and newer portions of our country, is to be regarded as a great moral benefit. Let the North and the South, the East and the West, from Maine to Oregon, be connected with Roads of iron, as soon as possible. The greatest danger, which threatens us now, is not Romanism, but barbarism; that wildness, lawlessness, and violence, which result from distance and isolation. Let distance, if possible, be annihilated, let speed have a race with emigration, and every straggler of the woods be held in close proximity with civilization, law and religion; and then the assimilating power, which resides in the better forms of society, will pervade and shape the whole mass into itself. It seems also to be the magnificent purpose of God, in our age of Roads, to set

this same power of mutual assimilation at work, on a yet broader scale, and so as to include all the churches and nations of Christendom—so that one part may give to another what it wants, and every church and nation find its complement in every other. A feeling of approximation, or a feeling after approximation is already evident. What was it, in fact, but a lively and free intercourse, which prompted a desire of union so remarkable as that which was manifested by the late convocation at London? In that fact, which twenty years ago was not in the conception of man, you may see the first fruits of Roads. More and greater will appear in due time; for God, I am persuaded, is preparing results of vaster compass than have yet appeared. In government, we have, as yet, nothing perfect, and yet we have all something good to contribute. Thrown together, by perpetual intercourse, and having it for our ideal to advance society and man, we shall naturally be assimilated most, to that which most commands our respect; and thus we shall mutually contribute what we have, and receive what we want. In government, for example, England may contribute the element of prescriptive order and legal energy; Prussia that of system and complete, scientific distribution; Rome that of divine authority, by which law becomes the ordinance of God—an element which, with us, is well nigh lost; France, that of theoretic law; the United States that of abstract equal right. Thus, all contributing and all receiving, all will be enriched. Nor let this pass for a mere fancy, or an unpractical dream. We are receiving from each other, by a silent influence, in just this manner, now; only not as consciously and with as much depth of impression, as we may hereafter, when livelier and more

extensive intercourse has brought us into a closer sympathy and travels and discussions have exhibited the points most worthy of respect, in the institutions of all. So in religion, the church of England may contribute impressions favorable to some kind of liturgical order. Germany may offer scripture learning and all possible views of Christian doctrine. Rome may come into the assimilating process, to infuse a solemn conviction of the need of catholic unity, in the Christian family. France, if she returns to religion, may contribute an exterior mold of social grace and Christian refinement. The United States may pour in the element of spiritual simplicity and practical activity.

God is wiser than we, and carries vaster purposes in His bosom, and broader truths, I am persuaded, than our childish thoughts have comprehended, or conceived. Therefore, doubtless, it would be much for us to gain, in this matter of religion, if we could yield the possibility that we are none of us infallible, or perfectly wise, in every thing, and suffer the hope that He is now pouring the nations together, in these last days, that He may assimilate their views and fill out the glorious orb of christian truth and beauty ; and thus unite all Christendom, in a common effort, to fill this world of sin, with the light of Emmanuel.

Such, briefly, are the magnificent hopes that are now set before us, in the prospect of the coming ages. What forms of social beauty may be realized, what structures of art may be raised, what works of genius created, by the renovated wealth, intelligence, and piety of the world, I will not stop to conceive. Enough to know what transcends all such conjectures, and rises on the mind as the summit of all grandeur and sublimity, that Christ the Lord shall ascend into his throne

and reign, in the moral majesty of peace and righteousness, over the admiring nations. Seeing then the nations moved, for the first time, by a common impulse, and preparing to embrace, in the ways described, we will not fear to view a fact so wonderful, as a forerunner of the Son of Man. We will re-apply the fit words of prophecy, and say—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth, and—ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD."

